

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1           1.     A system for providing post-call announcements to a called party, the system  
2 comprising:

3                   a network switch for routing a call to a called party and playing a post-call  
4 announcement to the called party;

5                   a database storing information for use in determining whether a post-call  
6 announcement is to be played to the called party upon termination of the call; and

7                   means to couple to a network for transmitting the call and the post-call  
8 announcement to the called party.

1           2.     The system of claim 1, wherein the network switch includes an announcement  
2 frame for playing the post-call announcement to the called party.

1           3.     The system of claim 1, wherein the network switch forwards information related  
2 to at least one of the calling party and the called party to the database.

1           4.     The system of claim 3, wherein the database receives information from the  
2 network switch and queries the database based on the received information to determine which  
3 post-call announcement, if any, is to be played to the called party.

1           5.     The system of claim 4, wherein the database returns to the network switch an  
2 indication of a particular post-call announcement to be played.

1           6.     An apparatus for providing post-call announcements to a called party, the  
2 apparatus comprising:

3                 a database for storing information for use in determining whether a post-call  
4 announcement is to be played to the called party upon termination of the call;

5                 an announcement frame for playing a particular post-call announcement to the  
6 called party; and

7                 wherein the database returns an announcement number to the announcement  
8 frame indicating the particular post-call announcement to be played to the called party.

1           7.     The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the database maintains a communication  
2 connection to the announcement frame.

1           8.     The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the announcement frame is implemented in a  
2 network switch.

1           9.     The apparatus of claim 6, wherein a null announcement number indicates that no  
2 post-call announcement is played to the called party.

1           10.    The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the database counts how many times a post-call  
2 announcement is played for a given set of selection criteria.

1           11.    The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the announcement frame ceases to play a  
2 particular post-call announcement after the particular post-call announcement has been played to  
3 the called party three times.

1           12.     The apparatus of claim 6, wherein a terminating switch notifies the database of an  
2 outcome of the post-call announcement.

1           13.     The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the outcome relates to whether the called  
2 party was connected for the duration of the announcement.

1           14.     The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the announcement frame plays a particular  
2 post-call announcement until the terminating switch determines that the called party maintains a  
3 connection to the network for the entire duration of the particular post-call announcement.

1           15.    A method of providing post-call announcements to a called party, the method  
2    comprising the steps of:  
3                    receiving a call request from a calling party to a called party;  
4                    passing call attribute information to a database;  
5                    performing a look-up query at the database based on the call attribute information;  
6                    transmitting an announcement indication to an announcement frame;  
7                    routing a call to the called party;  
8                    determining whether the calling party has disconnected from the call; and  
9                    playing a particular post-call announcement, if any, to the called party when the  
10   calling party has disconnected from the call.

1           16.    The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:  
2                    ceasing billing of the calling party once the calling party has disconnected from  
3   the call prior to playing the particular post-call announcement; and  
4                    disconnecting the called party from the call.

1           17.    The method of claim 15, wherein the steps are performed in the order listed.

1           18.    The method of claim 15, wherein the step of routing a call to the called party is  
2   performed in parallel with the step of passing of the call attribute information to the database.

1           19.    The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:  
2                    counting how many times a particular post-call announcement is played for a  
3    given set of selection criteria; and  
4                    ceasing to play the particular post-call announcement after the particular post-call  
5    announcement has been played a predetermined number of times.

1           20.    The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of:  
2                    determining whether the called party is connected to the network for an entire  
3    duration of a particular post-call announcement; and  
4                    continuing to play the particular post-call announcement until the called party is  
5    connected to the network for the entire duration of the particular post-call announcement.

1           21.    The method of claim 15, wherein the step of transmitting is performed by an  
2    announcement frame located within a network switch.

1           22.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information comprises at least  
2    a portion of a calling party number.

1           23.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information comprises at least  
2    a portion of a called party number.

1           24.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information comprises at least  
2    a portion of a Carrier Identification Code.

1           25.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information comprises at least  
2   one trunk group characteristic.

1           26.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information comprises  
2   Originating Line Information.

1           27.    The method of claim 15, wherein the call attribute information includes at least  
2   two of: a calling party number portion, a called party number portion, a Carrier Identification  
3   Code, a trunk group characteristic, and Originating Line Information.